

TEXTBOOK REIMBURSEMENT

Commonly Asked Questions and Answers

1) *Can computer software be claimed for reimbursement?*

Yes, if the computer software is on the official adoption list or if it is part of an adopted (or waived) textbook. Computer software may also be claimed as a "workbook" if it is consumable, copyrighted material used by students for no more than one (1) school year which supplements a textbook and is designed to guide the work of a student by providing questions, exercises, etc.

2) *Can consumable kit materials such as chemicals, sand, and seeds be claimed for reimbursement?*

Yes, if the material is part of an adopted (or waived) textbook. The original purchase price of the kit is claimed as a textbook. When additional materials are needed, the cost should be claimed under "consumable textbooks".

3) *Do gifted and talented and special education textbooks claimed for reimbursement have to be listed on the state adoption list?*

No. For gifted and talented and special education, textbooks selected locally may be claimed for reimbursement.

4) *How is a per pupil cost determined for class sets, shared textbooks, and textbooks used on a quarter or semester basis?*

When a textbook is used by more than one student, the cost of the textbook must be prorated.
This is done by taking the total cost of the textbook divided by the number of students using the textbook to obtain a per pupil cost of textbook. This same procedure should be used to determine the per pupil cost for kits. If a textbook is used for two separate semesters by two different students, only half of the cost may be assessed to each student. If on the other hand, a course is only taught one semester and the textbook is then shelved for the second semester, the full cost of the textbook is used.

5) *Can Weekly Readers be claimed for reimbursement?*

No. Weekly Readers are strictly supplemental materials. If applicable, they can be claimed for reimbursement as consumable instructional materials if used in gifted and talented or special education.

6) *Can miscellaneous supplies or fees be claimed for reimbursement?*

No. Specifically, locker fees, paper fees, and user fees cannot be claimed for reimbursement. These fees are the responsibility of the local school corporation.

7) *Can a flat fee be used for reimbursement for textbooks and materials?*

A flat fee can only be used for special education students attending a cooperative. If the cooperative charges a flat fee for instructional materials, the flat fee amount may be shown on the claim form under consumable instructional materials. This will alleviate the school corporation from trying to obtain textbook and workbook costs from the cooperative. Please note: Only the instructional fee may be claimed, this does not include tuition payments.

- 8) *What are developmentally appropriate materials?*

Developmentally appropriate materials are items used **INSTEAD OF THE PURCHASE OF A TEXTBOOK**. **These materials may be claimed for instruction in Kindergarten through Grade 3, laboratories, and children's literature programs** **IF** a textbook is not used as part of the instruction. In most cases, a waiver not to use a textbook must be obtained. Developmentally appropriate materials might include: hands-on manipulatives; authentic literature; materials used in laboratory courses; etc.

- 9) *What types of items can be claimed as "workbooks" for reimbursement?*

Workbooks are consumable, copyrighted materials which supplement a textbook and are designed to guide the work of a student by providing questions, exercises, etc. Specific examples might include: standard workbooks; activity logs; practice sets; computer software; etc.

- 10) *Can testing materials be claimed for reimbursement?*

No. Not under any situation.

- 11) *Can dictionaries and thesauruses be claimed for reimbursement?*

No. These are strictly supplemental materials. If applicable, they can be claimed for reimbursement as consumable instructional materials if used in gifted and talented or special education.

- 12) *Can teacher-generated materials be claimed for reimbursement?*

Only teacher-generated materials used in gifted and talented and special education may be claimed. These materials are claimed under "consumable instructional materials".

- 13) *Do students who qualify for reduced priced lunch qualify for textbook assistance?*

Yes. Students who qualify for FREE or REDUCED PRICED MEALS qualify for textbook assistance.

- 14) *Does the school corporation have to offer a free meals program in order to qualify for textbook assistance?*

No. The school corporation must have parents fill out the application form in order to determine if the federal guideline is met. However, an actual meals program does not have to be offered.

- 15) *If a student applies for free/reduced priced meals and is approved and then later no longer qualifies, does this student qualify for textbook assistance?*

Yes. Once a student qualifies, he qualifies. The only exception is if the student does not later qualify as a result of falsified information.

- 16) *Do students who apply for free/reduced meals after October 31 qualify for textbook assistance?*

Yes. October 31 is the due date for filing a claim with the state. Students who apply after this date cannot be denied assistance. This also applies for students who previously did not qualify then later resubmit and do qualify. The fee becomes the responsibility of the local school corporation.

- 17) *Can a school corporation bill a parent for the balance after state reimbursement?*

The school corporation may request, but cannot require, the parent to pay the balance. The practice of sending "past due" notices or "final billing" notices is not appropriate. By law, the school corporation is responsible for any balance and pressure should not be put on parents to pay a balance.

- 18) *Can a textbook rental bill be split into components (textbook rental and other fees) so eligible parents can be billed for the "other fees".*

No. The statute says, "The school corporation shall pay the cost of the student's required fees." This includes all textbooks, materials, supplies, and other required class fees.

- 19) *Can a school corporation withhold transcripts if textbook rental is owed?*

No. Indiana Code states, "A school corporation may not withhold school books and supplies, require any special services from a child, or deny the child any benefit or privilege because the parent fails to pay required fees." A school corporation may not withhold textbooks, workbooks, report cards, pre-paid school pictures, transcripts, or any other service as a result of unpaid fees. This applies to **ALL** students, eligible as well as ineligible. The school corporation does have recourse against the parents of ineligible students through small claims court.

- 20) *Can the local school corporation establish an application deadline for textbook assistance?*

No. A student can apply at anytime during the school year and if the financial qualification is met, the student qualifies for assistance.

- 21) *Can a school corporation charge an eligible family for the cost to replace a lost or damaged textbook?*

Yes. The textbook statute is for the rental of property only. If a textbook is lost or damaged, the school corporation can charge a replacement cost and can follow standard collection procedures to collect the amount.

- 22) *Can a school corporation withhold diplomas or deny participation in extra curricular activities if a student's textbook fees have not been paid?*

No. Eligible or ineligible, a student cannot be denied any right, benefit, or privilege due to unpaid fees. Recourse is against the parents and not punishment to the student.

- 23) *In order to claim an item for reimbursement, does the school corporation have to assess a fee to the parent?*

No. If the school corporation offers free or reduced priced textbooks to all students or does not charge for other reimbursable items, the school corporation can still claim reimbursement according to the limitations set forth in the statute.